DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 348 768 EA 024 243

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TITLE Towards an Understanding of Organizational Culture in Schools of Education: Implications for Leadership Development.
PUB DATE Apr 92
NOTE 17p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Francisco, CA, April 20-24, 1992).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Faculty; *Communication (Thought Transfer); Faculty Development; Higher Education; *Leadership Styles; *Organizational Climate; Organizational Communication; *Schools of Education

ABSTRACT

Findings of a study that examined how differences among education faculty's organizational perspectives and behaviors influence leadership are presented in this paper. Bolman and Deal's (1984) model of organizational frames, or ways in which individuals relate to organizations, was used to identify political, symbolic, human resource, and structural views. The study sought to determine how organizational frames interact with academic fields of study and time spent on administrative tasks. A survey mailed to 6 schools of education representing different geographic regions of the United States elicited 53 out of 118 responses from faculty members. Findings indicate that the human resource frame was the prevalent mode of organizational behavior. A recommendation is made to recognize the multidimensional characteristics of organizations and to provide faculty training in the use of different organizational frames, particularly political and symbolic. Two tables and an appendix of summary statistics are included. (Contains 13 references.) (LMI)

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Towards an Understanding of Organizational Culture in Schools of Education: Implications for Leadership Development

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Presented at the Annual Meeting of the

American Educational Research Association,

San Francisco California,

April 22, 1992

(Session Number 30.26)

EA 024 243

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Introduction

Stereotypes abound among laypersons and even scholars concerning the personalities of academicians. More serious discussions of the issue ask whether professors have a certain personality because life in academia creates certain traits or because people who have such traits to begin with choose to be professors. Yet even if these questions of causality are left aside, a legitimate question remains about whether professors in different academic fields have significantly divergent personality traits, particularly with respect to how they relate to others and to their organizations. The purpose of this research is to analyze how educators' behavior within organizations is related to their academic field of study. For example, do faculty in Educational Administration programs have different potential behaviors within organizations than do faculty in Curriculum Studies programs? Another question this paper seeks to address is whether the amount of time spent on administrative tasks influences a person toward a particular vision of organizations. For example, does the amount of time spent on administrative activities make a faculty member more political in her/his behavior within a school of education? The ultimate goal of this study is to support the notion that knowledge of the ways in which individual faculty members relate to organizations can enhance the effectiveness of leaders in such schools, and then to demonstrate that faculty in different fields have significant differences in the ways they conceive organizations. Because these differences exist, and because the relevant literature indicates that knowledge of organizational frames can aid leaders, future strategies for leadership development might benefit from knowledge of these potential differences among faculty members.

Review of the Literature

Over the last two decades valuable contributions have been made to organizational theory. In the specific field of organizational behavior a significant body of knowledge has

accumulated through the works of Perrow (1972), March (1976), Argyris and Schön (1978), Mintzberg (1983), and Schein (1985) concerning sources of power and leadership and the role of individuals in dealing with organizational conflict. Their contributions reveal that, in spite of the complexity and ambiguity of organizations, certain general principles could be used to analyze these organizations and better understand how individuals and social groups interact within them.

A turning point in the study of organizations occurred with the advent of works by Ortega (1982) and Bolman and Deal (1984). Past research centered on ascertaining the culture of organizations. These studies were accomplished by using a self-report methodology that relied on individuals' assessments in determining organizational culture. Ortega (1982) and Bolman and Deal (1984) suggest that, although organizations have a particular culture, individuals possess a vision of their own that may or may not match the culture of the organization in which they are immersed. In either case, these "personal" dimensions or frames influence both individuals' evaluation of their organization as well as their behavior within it.

Ortega posits that there are five dimensions which describe the way individuals relate to organizations: *rational, relational* (*human resource* for Bolman and Deal), *bureaucratic, political,* and *symbolic.* Ortega's work further maintains that individuals within organizations represent each of the five dimensions through a vision of the world and of human beings, and by sustaining a distinctive group of values, beliefs, and behaviors (Ortega, 1982).

Bolman and Deal (1984) offer a similar view of organizations by defining them in terms of four frames: *structural, political, human resource,* and *symbolic.* These frames generally correspond to the dimensions in Ortega's conception. The *political* view

describes the dynamics of power relationships and struggles for control that occur between individuals and groups. A *human resource* view of organizations involves concern for the needs and emotions of individuals, as well as a desire to adjust organizations to fit people or to adjust the people to fit the organization. The *symbolic* view assigns importance to public and personal recognition, ceremonies and awards, and other metaphorical behaviors.

Recent quantitative and qualitative research performed by Bolman and Deal (1992) identify a correlation between effectiveness as a manager and the use of the structural frame. The report also establishes that leadership effectiveness is associated with the *symbolic* frame but is unrelated to the *structural* frame. Strength in the *human resource* and the *political* frame both predict success as a leader and as a manager.

Similarities Between Ortega and Bolman and Deal

Both the research of Bolman and Deal and the works of Ortega deal with at least three important issues: 1) the organizational views (dimensions or frames) can be measured or assessed through the uses of quantitative or qualitative methods; 2) any given organization possesses components of each dimension, but certain dimensions are dominant (Ortega, 1985; Bolman and Deal, 1990, and 1992); and 3) individuals have dominant frames or dimensions, much like organizations. People tend to rely on one or two frames to understand the internal workings of the organization and behave accordingly. Other authors reach similar conclusions. For example, Cuéllar used Ortega's inventory to survey secondary school principals in Mexico and California and concludes that in both groups, the *human resource* frame is predominant (Cuéllar, 1989). Bensimon (1989), using Bolman and Deal's methodology, interviewed college presidents and found that they predominantly use the *human resource* and *symbolic* frames.

Differences between Ortega and Bolman and Deal

In contrast to Ortega, Bolman and Deal have merged into the *structural* view the attributes that Ortega identifies as part of the *rational* dimension and the *bureaucratic* dimension. For Ortega, the *rational* dimension consists of logical behaviors designed to maximize the preferences of a particular individual within an organization, while also accounting for the collective benefit of the entire group. The distinction between the rational dimension and the bureaucratic is important for Ortega because in many organizations, particularly large organizations, the element of rationality, still attributed by Bolman and Deal to the *structural* frame, is lost in a network of papers, rules, signatures, seals, and reports.

The most important difference between Ortega and Bolman and Deal lies in the conception of how the organizational frames or dimensions interact. For Bolman and Deal the frames are different in kind but equivalent in importance. Each frame is equated with a lens that provides an individuals with a different view of their organization. Ortega suggests that *every* organization has a pentadimensional reality that can be grasped *at the same time* -- individuals need not exclude the symbolic and political dimension, for example, if they want to see the structural. Thus, each dimension is present in any organization, all dimensions are closely interrelated, each one affects the others, and they all interact in a delicate interplay. This difference holds implications for academic leadership training and development. Bolman and Deal focus on preparing leaders by strengthening their ability to use multiple organizational frames. Ortega suggests training leaders by developing the ability to permanently localize the five dimensions in organizations while identifying the predominant one.

The work of Ortega and Bolman and Deal offers a provocative avenue for continuing research, particularly in schools of education. One important line for continuing

inquiry is to explore whether faculty members have different dominant organizational frames depending on their academic area of specialty, as defined by the program in which they teach and research. If this is the case, one interpretation holds that individuals with a predominant subject area specialty build an organization in the image of this orientation. Thus, an organization of researchers that focuses on a particular subject area might reflect the values and culture contained in that subject area. This group of assumptions provides enhanced understanding of the predominant values, assumptions and beliefs of every program and should help administrators deal with the demands of faculty in different departments. A rival hypothesis would hold that different fields within education appeal to individuals who might be predisposed to view organizations in a particular way. Even if self-selection were the cause of these potential differences, academic fields would still have a particular set of values and conceptions about organizations; knowledge of these would values would still prove advantageous to leaders.

Unlike many previous studies, this research uses the framework of organizational dimensions to study members of an academic organization not simply the administrators or leaders. This is justified because professors generally work independently and research subjects that may have a profound impact on their world view.

Methods

The goal of the study was to determine how the framework of organizational views (frames or dimensions) interacts with academic fields of study and time spent on administrative tasks. Subjects were asked to identify themselves as primarily belonging to one of five academic fields generally studied within schools of education: administration, curriculum, research methodology and evaluation, counseling and human development, and history and foundations. In addition, subjects were asked their gender, and were

requested to estimate the percentage of time at work that they spent carrying out administrative or supervisory responsibilities.

A self-report questionnaire was utilized to assess the organizational views (frames or dimensions) of the subjects. Subjects were mailed Bolman and Deal's leadership orientations instrument, a validated survey (for validation, see Bolman and Deal, 1984) which assesses how persons relate to organizations according to their conception of *political, symbolic, human resource, and structural* frames.

In order to ensure a representative sample, subjects were chosen from six schools of education representing various geographic regions across the United States. Though these schools do not constitute a representative random sample of schools of education nationwide, they can be conceptualized as a representative sample of "schools like these," with similar general characteristics. Included among the pool of schools were two large Midwestern state universities; a medium-sized public university in the West, as well as two in the Southeast; and a large Southwestern state university. Questionnaires were provided to approximately 20 faculty members at each school. A total of 118 questionnaires was sent out, of which 53 were returned completed.

Once questionnaires were received, data were tabulated and several analyses of variance were performed. First, an analysis was conducted to determine whether the four separate sub-scores on Bolman and Deal's leadership orientation survey varied with respect to academic field.

Findings

The entire sample, except for the history/foundations group, has a statistically significant propensity toward the *human resource* frame. This is somewhat surprising, as

it seems to confirm the null hypothesis (i.e. that there is no difference in the frames of the academic disciplines). The emphasis on the *human resource* view is present to a remarkable degree across disciplines. Table 1 summarizes the mean organizational frame score for each academic discipline.

(Insert Table 1 about here).

If the *human resource* frame is controlled (i.e. disregarded in assessing differences), there is a significant difference in the distribution of frames in each academic discipline. An ANOVA comparing the means of the organizational dimension scores for each group revealed the following breakdown. For scholars in educational administration the *symbolic* frame was second in importance to the *human resource* frame. The *political* and then the *structural* frame followed. For professors who engage chiefly in curriculum studies, the *human resource* frame was followed by the *symbolic* frame, just as for professors of administration. The *structural* frame followed closely, with the *political* frame the least used. Researchers in methodology and evaluation exhibited most prominently the *human resource frame*, then the *structural*, followed by the *political*, and finally the *symbolic* frame. Professors of counseling showed strength in the *human resource* frame, then the *symbolic* frame, followed by the *structural* and then the *political* frame. Lastly, scholars in the history or foundations of education were characterized by the *structural* frame, even over the *human resource* frame, followed by the *symbolic* and then the *political*. Statistically, all the differences in frames are significant (see appendix for statistical details).

In addition, Pearson correlations illustrate the relationship between and among frames and time spent on administrative tasks. Although cross validation performed by

Bolman and Deal in the past show the instrument to have significant discriminant validity, several notable autocorrelations were identified among frames. The *human resource* dimension was negatively correlated with the *political* frame (r= -.135). The *structural* frame was also correlated negatively with the *political* frame (r=-.286) and with the *symbolic* frame (r=-.402). Meanwhile, the *symbolic* frame was highly correlated with the political (r=.595). Correlations between time spent on administrative tasks and each of the frames were not as high as the above autocorrelations, but can still provide predictive information about the frames. The amount of time that subjects spent on administrative tasks was positively correlated with the *political*, *symbolic*, and *human resource* frames (r= .139, .117, and .098 respectively). A stronger negative correlation existed between time on administration and the *structural* frame (r= .195).

(Insert table 2 about here).

Discussion

This research has found that the *human resource* frame is the most used by faculty in schools of education. One way of interpreting these data is to acknowledge that education is considered one of the "helping" professions, and academics who study education have been socialized and oriented towards the *human resource* frame. Hence, it is not illogical to find that all the academic fields that were considered, except history/foundations, exhibited the *human resource* frame as the most frequently used. Since previous research suggests that a balanced range of frames among its members strengthens an organization, then perhaps schools of education need to seek new ways of developing the *symbolic*, *political*, and *structural* frames in their faculties. What perhaps sets schools of education apart from other organizations is the pervasive use of the *human resource* frame. A promising avenue of further research is to prove that members of organizations other than schools of education predominantly favor particular frames.

The results are amenable to the idea that academic disciplines at a school of education not only can be used to predict the distribution of organizational frames, but also to influence a certain organizational climate, whether by attracting individuals with particular frames or by providing a favorable environment for the development of certain frames. A major conflict involving a faculty member in counseling, for example, might be more effectively resolved by appealing to and using values of the *human resource* frame. Meanwhile, strategies for motivating a department of educational administration may be more effective if the appeal is to the *symbolic* frame.

Based on these conclusions, leadership development programs in schools of education should consider that any administrator who is not well skilled in the *human resource* frame is likely to encounter difficulties dealing with faculty members for whom this frame is predominant, since this orientation in particular is fundamentally different from the others. While it is likely that a Dean or department head would favor the *human resource* frame, as do most other faculty members in education, one can not assume that administrators are trained to recognize or interact with the frames which influence organizational culture. Training may also help leaders to recognize the characteristic frames of particular academic areas, or to employ strategies to promote a balance of frames among faculty members and /or groups within the faculty.

While there is a lack of empirical evidence to determine that a balanced combination of all frames will work to the advantage of leadership, previous studies suggest that training in identifying the multidimensional characteristics of every situation can increase the effectiveness of leaders. Assuming this is the case, those responsible for leadership and development programs would be well advised to create opportunities to provide faculty members with practice in using different frames to view organizations. In particular, the

the *political* and the *symbolic* frame have been found to correlate highly with effectiveness as a leader and manager but are, on the face, perceived as unimportant by both faculty and administrators. Such reframing experience is congruent with the findings of Bolman and Deal (1992) who suggest that this training is particularly important because of "the widespread feeling that politics in organizations is an unpleasant, if unavoidable evil." Although both Ortega and Bolman and Deal agree on the importance of training leaders to recognize the multidimensional characteristics of organizations, further research can more specifically explore Ortega's framework by employing an instrument he has validated.

This research is significant both in terms of increasing the practical understanding of how organizations influence individuals, and how individuals' characteristics are integrated to form a group with common goals. Research could proceed on whether it is the nature of a subject area that molds an individual's ways of relating to an organization, or whether different academic fields within education simply attract scholars who already have specific differences in personality. Studies can also explore the specific values, beliefs, and attitudes represented by professions or academic fields of study. Although issues of values and attitudes in relation to academic and professional fields are often discussed informally, they merit systematic scholarly inquiry because of the profound implications for organizations and their leaders.

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Table 1: Means for the different organizational dimension based on academic field.

Administration
TOTAL OBSERVATIONS: 17

	Political	Symbolic	Hum. res.	Structural
MINIMUM	31.000	37.000	36.000	25.000
MAXIMUM	55.000	63.000	59.000	46.000
MEAN	**39.706**	**44.294**	**48.941**	**34.471**
STANDARD DEV	6.743	6.172	6.581	4.758

Curriculum Studies
TOTAL OBSERVATIONS: 13

	Political	Symbolic	Hum. res.	Structural
MINIMUM	29.000	32.000	43.000	31.000
MAXIMUM	55.000	55.000	59.000	52.000
MEAN	**39.923**	**44.231**	**51.077**	**46.154**
STANDARD DEV	7.077	6.648	4.132	5.900

Measurement and/or Research Methodology
TOTAL OBSERVATIONS: 9

	Political	Symbolic	Hum. res.	Structural
MINIMUM	29.000	27.000	48.000	41.000
MAXIMUM	36.000	34.000	66.000	57.000
MEAN	**32.333**	**30.778**	**55.222**	**50.889**
STANDARD DEV.	2.500	2.819	5.094	5.555

Counseling and/or Human Development
TOTAL OBSERVATIONS: 6

	Political	Symbolic	Hum. res.	Structural
MINIMUM	29.000	34.000	48.000	36.000
MAXIMUM	41.000	50.000	61.000	53.000
MEAN	**35.333**	**45.500**	**56.500**	**43.167**
STANDARD DEV	4.457	5.891	4.506	6.369

History and/or Foundations
TOTAL OBSERVATIONS: 8

	Political	Symbolic	Hum.res.	Structur
MINIMUM	30.000	36.000	39.000	38.000
MAXIMUM	47.000	46.000	57.000	66.000
MEAN	**37.375**	**40.875**	**52.000**	**53.500**
STANDARD DEV	5.236	3.091	6.612	8.864

Table 2: Pearson correlation matrix indicating the intercorrelation between organizational dimensions and time spent on administrative tasks.

	Admin. Time	Political	Symbolic	Hum. Res.	Structural
Admin. time	1.000				
Political	0.139	1.000			
Symbolic	0.117	0.562	1.000		
Relational	0.098	-0.158	0.037	1.000	
Structural	-0.195	-0.319	-0.446	0.202	1.000

NUMBER OF OBSERVATIONS: 53

APPENDIX: Statistical Details and Calculations

Included here are summary statistics and tables describing the results of analyses of variance performed to ascertain differences in the mean scores for each frame (*political*, *symbolic*, *human resource*, and *structural*) on the Bolman and Deal Leadership Orientations inventory. All ANOVA's are two-tailed, one factor tests and assess the differences in organizational frames with respect to academic fields. The difference in the *political* frame was significant at the .025 level. The differences in the *structural* frame were significant (p= .0001), and the differences in the *symbolic* frame were also significant at .0001. Although the *human resource* frame almost always dominated, there were still differences in its strength among the academic disciplines (p= .026). The distribution of frames is different for the academic disciplines; the ANOVA does not statistically determine by how much or in what direction they differ, but only that they differ at all. As noted previously, results from Ortega's instrument are not discussed in this paper.

SUMMARY STATISTICS FOR differences in the political dimension.
BARTLETT TEST FOR HOMOGENEITY OF GROUP VARIANCES
CHI-SQUARE = 9.093 DF= 4 PROBABILITY = 0.059
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE:

SOURCE	SUM OF SQUARES	DF	MEAN SQUARE	F	PROBABILITY
BETWEEN GROUPS	426.226	4	06.556	3.063	**0.025**
WITHIN GROUPS	1669.661	48	34.785		

SUMMARY STATISTICS FOR differences in the symbolic dimension.
BARTLETT TEST FOR HOMOGENEITY OF GROUP VARIANCES
CHI-SQUARE = 9.116 DF= 4 PROBABILITY = 0.058
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE:

SOURCE	SUM OF SQUARES	DF	MEAN SQUARE	F	PROBABILITY
BETWEEN GROUPS	1362.912	4	340.728	11.328	**0.0001**
WITHIN GROUPS	1443.768	48	30.078		

SUMMARY STATISTICS FOR differences in the human resource dimension.
BARTLETT TEST FOR HOMOGENEITY OF GROUP VARIANCES
CHI-SQUARE = 3.562 DF= 4 PROBABILITY = 0.469
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE:

SOURCE	SUM OF SQUARES	DF	MEAN SQUARE	F	PROBABILITY
BETWEEN GROUPS	383.873	4	95.968	3.045	**0.026**
WITHIN GROUPS	1512.920	48	31.519		

SUMMARY STATISTICS FOR differences in the structural dimension.
BARTLETT TEST FOR HOMOGENEITY OF GROUP VARIANCES
CHI-SQUARE = 4.203 DF= 4 PROBABILITY = 0.379
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE:

SOURCE	SUM OF SQUARES	DF	MEAN SQUARE	F	PROBABILITY
BETWEEN GROUPS	2757.331	4	689.333	18.592	**0.000**
WITHIN GROUPS	1779.650	48	37.076		